

University of Groningen

## That most important Science. The Study of Church History in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century

Molendijk, Arie L.

*Published in:*

Dutch Review of Church History - Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis 84

**IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.**

*Document Version*

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Publication date:*

2004

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Molendijk, A. L. (2004). That most important Science. The Study of Church History in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century. *Dutch Review of Church History - Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 84, 84, 358-387.

### Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

### Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

“THAT MOST IMPORTANT SCIENCE”

The Study of Church History in the Netherlands in the Nineteenth Century<sup>1</sup>

[*Dutch Review of Church History - Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 84 (2004) 358-387]

Arie L. Molendijk, University of Groningen

“We place ourselves, in the autumn of the year 1823, between Leiden and Utrecht, and there we meet in the humble deckhouse of a canalboat - at the time the most common means of transport between the two cities - [the theologians Kist and Royaards], ... matured from boys to men, in friendly togetherness. How much has changed in their lot and in their lives! How important the future is for them, and how important have they become for the future of our Fatherland! Both have been appointed professors of church history. ... Both are inspired by high expectations and noble intentions. Deeply aware, as they are, of the heavy weight of their calling, highly pleased with the discipline of academic education commended and entrusted to them, they burn with yearning, ready to make their contributions to it, so that the oh-so-neglected study of church history will flourish again in wider circles. To this conversation, which remained unforgettable for both, the *Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* (*Review of Church History*) owes its origin”.<sup>2</sup>

This romanticized impression<sup>3</sup> comes from the hand of the Utrecht church historian Bernard ter

---

<sup>1</sup> This text is the slightly revised translation of my inaugural address at the University of Groningen in 2000. It originally appeared as a separate booklet: Arie L. Molendijk, “*Een Hoogstbelangrijke Wetenschap*”. *De beoefening van de Kerkgeschiedenis in Nederland in de negentiende eeuw* (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2000), 43 pages. The translation was prepared by Ms. Sylvia M. Dierks-Mallett and made possible by a grant of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences (Vertaalfonds KNAW/Stichting Reprerecht), for which I would like to thank both of them.

<sup>2</sup> B. ter Haar, W. Moll & E.B. Swalue, eds., *Geschiedenis der Christelijke Kerk in Nederland, in tafereelen* [History of the Christian Church in the Netherlands in Tableaus], 2 parts (Amsterdam, 1864-1869), part 1, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> The contrast with Kist’s own dry description is striking; cf. N.C. Kist, “Ter nagedachtenis van Herman Johan Royaards, den vriend mijner jeugd en van geheel mijn leven, mijnen studie-genoot en mede-uitgever van het Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis” [“In Memory of Herman Johan Royaards, a Friend of my Youth and my Whole Life, my Fellow-student and Co-publisher of the Review of Church History”], *Nieuw Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, inzonderheid van Nederland* [Review] 2 (1854), 401-461, p. 419. The various different

Haar (1806-1880) - also known as one of the many, later so maligned, 19th century clergymen-poets.<sup>4</sup> The study of church history in the Netherlands culminated, according to ter Haar, in the work of the two founders of the *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis* (*Review of Church History*) - as the publication was originally known - namely Nicolaas Christiaan Kist (1793-1859) and Herman Johannes Royaards (1794-1854). Prior to that, the discipline had been in a bad way. Lectures drew few students and, in the eyes of later scholars, many church history studies were too verbose.<sup>5</sup> By this time, however, the “love for church history studies in our own country” had been re-awakened.<sup>6</sup> The time had now come for a work, available to a wider public, covering the history of the Christian church in the Netherlands, and indeed - in the years between 1864 and 1869 - this would ultimately materialize in a two-part work under the editorship of ter Haar, together with several of his colleagues (professors and clergymen), the number of pages totalling more than 1200. The audience targetted, however, was not particularly broad. In his introduction, ter Haar wrote that he saw an increased interest in national church history “not only in our higher and more sophisticated classes, but also in our more bourgeois circles”.<sup>7</sup> It was ter Haar’s hope that there would be a “happy union” of love for religion and love for the fatherland, an aspect that would, in consequence, certainly benefit sales of the book.

A number of themes have thus been pin-pointed, all of which are crucially important to a proper understanding of 19th century church history in the Netherlands: i.e. class consciousness, the idea of a religious-moral education and edification of society (or at least parts of it), and the close link people saw between religion and patriotism. The Netherlands had a special role to play in the development of Christianity. I must not, however, jump too far ahead, and must first

---

names of the Review are to be found in the Appendix. In the following footnotes the same short name ‘Review’ will be used. Each new name was accompanied by new numbering, which results in references such as ‘Review 2 (1859)’.

<sup>4</sup> G. Brom, *De dominee in onze literatuur* [The Clergyman in our Literature] (Nijmegen, 1924).

<sup>5</sup> Chr. Sepp, *Proeve eener pragmatische geschiedenis der theologie in Nederland, sedert het laatst der vorige eeuw tot op onzen tijd (1787-1858)* [A Foretaste of a Pragmatic History of Theology in the Netherlands, from the Last Century to the Present Day] (Amsterdam, 1860), p. 99: the announcement of church history lectures was supplemented with the text: “aut aliis [horis] auditoribus magic commodis”; J.G. de Hoop Scheffer, “De studie der vaderlandsche kerkhistorie” [“The Study of National Church History”], *De Gids* [The Guide] 29 (1865), first part, pp. 201-213, p. 202f. in particular.

<sup>6</sup> Ter Haar, et.al., *Geschiedenis der Christelijke Kerk*, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 1. Ter Haar and those around him saw their work as a supplement to: N. Beets, ed., *Geschiedenis der Christelijke Kerk in tafereelen* [The History of the Christian Church in Tableaus] 5 parts, (Amsterdam, 1852-1859).

of all specify more fully the subject of this contribution, which is the study of church history in the Netherlands in the 19th century. How did the church historians of the time regard the method, the content and the importance of their particular discipline? What assumptions formed the basis of their studies? The second of these two questions concerns not so much the explicitly formulated standpoints, but rather the premises they took for granted or failed to discuss - of which they were hardly, if at all, aware.

It is, of course, impossible to deal with these questions in any detail in the short span of this contribution. I have decided, therefore, to throw my spotlight on just a few specific - and in my opinion crucial - developments which have taken place in our field of interest. And, needless to say, the *Dutch Review of Church History*, established in 1829, has a particular role to play in it, from the moment of its foundation right up to the present day. It is not without a good deal of pride that the comment is sometimes made that this journal is, in fact, the oldest scientific journal of its kind existing in the Netherlands - eight years older, in fact, than the well-known monthly *De Gids* (*The Guide*).<sup>8</sup> Apart from individual scholars, academic institutions such as university chairs, scientific organisations and periodicals have a decisive role to play within the history of science. In this light, it is remarkable that historiography has paid so little attention to the *Review*<sup>9</sup>, although a number of commemorative articles have been published.<sup>10</sup> And they are

---

<sup>8</sup> R. Aerts, *De Letterheren. Liberale cultuur in de negentiende eeuw: het tijdschrift De Gids* [Men of Letters. Liberal Culture in the Nineteenth Century: the Journal The Guide], Amsterdam 1997; other examples of early Dutch journals are: *Bijdragen voor vaderlandsche geschiedenis en oudheidkunde* [Contributions on National History and Archaeology], edited by Is. An. Nijhoff, started in 1837, and the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* [Mennonite Contributions] in 1861.

<sup>9</sup> Little attention has been directed to the theological periodical culture of the 19th century. One exception, however, is F.G.M. Broeyer's article "Theologische en kerkelijke pluriformiteit weerspiegeld in tijdschriften. De jaren vijftig van de negentiende eeuw" ["Theological and Church Pluriformity reflected in Periodicals - in the 1850s"], in: G. Harinck and D. Th. Kuiper, eds., *Anderhalve eeuw protestantse periodieke pers* [A Century and a Half of Protestant Periodicals], *Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van het Nederlands Protestantisme na 1800*, deel 7 [Yearbook for the History of Dutch Protestantism after 1800, part 7] (Zoetermeer, 1999), pp. 12-50; a more general study is G.J. Johannes, *De barometer van de smaak. Tijdschriften in Nederland 1770-1830* [The Barometer of Taste. Periodicals in the Netherlands 1770-1830], (The Hague, 1995).

<sup>10</sup> A. Eekhof, "De geschiedenis van het 'Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis' (1829-1929)" ["The History of the Dutch Review of Church History 1829-1929"], *Review*, new series 22 (1929), 153-198 (included information on publishers, subscription prices and the reading public); J. Lindeboom, "Honderd jaren Kerkgeschiedenis naar honderd jaren Archief" ["A Hundred Years of Church History based on a Hundred Years of the Review"], *Review* new series 22 (1929), 199-218; O. de Jong, "Het 'Archief' in zijn derde halve eeuw" ["The 'Review' in its Third Half Century"], *Review* 61 (1981), 1-6; cf. F. Pijper, "Kist, Moll en Acquoy, de grondvesters der Nederlandsche historische school" ["Kist, Moll and Acquoy, the Founders of the Dutch Historical School"], *Review*, new series 4 (1907), 237-252; L. Knappert, "De hoogleraren Kist en Suringa in de theologische Faculteit te Leiden" ["Professors Kist and Suringa at the Theological Faculty in Leiden"], *Review* 29 (1937), 137-140.

not completely devoid of criticism. A good example is the essay presented by the Groningen church historian Johannes Lindeboom (1882-1958) on the occasion of the *Review*'s centenary celebrations in 1929. Without formulating it in the strongest of terms, Lindeboom clearly regretted the fact that less attention had been directed to the history of dogmas and the history of ideas generally.<sup>11</sup> A particularly striking fact is that during his long tenure as editor of the *Review*, Lindeboom himself tended to have his more principled pieces published elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

Critical reflections on the *Review* are rare, the most renowned probably being the memorandum published by the Mennonite professor and later editor of the *Review* Jakob Gijsbert de Hoop Scheffer (1819-1893) in 1865 in *De Gids* (*The Guide*). In his view, archivalistic pieces were too dominant. He would have preferred to have seen the "well-reasoned list of names" of Dutch Reformed clergymen in Zoelen published there at the expense of the local church council, rather than in the *Review*.<sup>13</sup> Why, he wondered, were texts no longer being edited and shortened? Nor could he stifle the sigh: "is there no mercy - does absolutely *everything* have to be published?".<sup>14</sup> This was not meant in any way to deny the importance of sources and the study of them, indeed this is very apparent in de Hoop Scheffer's sketch of what he regarded as Royaard's careless way of working, pointing by way of explanation, among other things, to Royaard's wealth, which impeded his ability "to understand that even just one day he spent himself in the archives was better than sending ten highly-paid copyists there for ten

---

<sup>11</sup> Lindeboom, "Honderd Jaren", p. 215.

<sup>12</sup> Lindeboom was editor of the *Review* in the period 1911-1957; J. Lindeboom, "De dogmenhistorische theorieën van Ernst Troeltsch" ["The Dogma Historical Theories of Ernst Troeltsch"], *Theologisch Tijdschrift* [Theological Journal] 53 (1919), 181-223. For information on Lindeboom see W. Nijenhuis, "Johannes Lindeboom (1882-1958). Kerkhistoricus tussen de tijden" ["Johannes Lindeboom (1882-1958). Church Historian between the Times"], in: G.A. van Gemert, J. Schuller tot Peursum-Keijer, A.J. Vanderjagt, eds., "*Om niet aan onwetendheid te bezwijken*". *Groningse geleerden 1614-1989* ["In Order not to Succumb to Ignorance". Groningen Scholars 1614-1989], Hilversum 1989, pp. 241-257; cf. W.F. Dankbaar, "De theologie in Groningen sinds het begin van de twintigste eeuw" ["Theology in Groningen since the Beginning of the 20th Century"], in: *Universitas Groningana MCMXIV-MCMLXIV. Gedenkboek ter gelegenheid van het 350-jarig bestaan der Rijks-Universiteit te Groningen uitgegeven in opdracht van de Academische Senaat* [Commemorative Book commissioned by the Academic Senate on the Occasion of the 350th Anniversary of the Founding of Groningen University] (Groningen, 1964), pp. 58-79, pp. 68-70 in particular.

<sup>13</sup> N.C. Kist, "De hervormde Gemeente te Zoelen in Neder-Betuwe" ["The Dutch Reformed Parish in Zoelen, Neder-Betuwe"] *Review* 2 (1859), 442-463.

<sup>14</sup> De Hoop Scheffer, "De studie der vaderlandsche kerkhistorie" ["The Study of our National Church History"], p. 209 (italics in the original).

days”.<sup>15</sup> The image de Hoop Scheffer sketches here is both tendentious and charged. Lindeboom even referred to it as an indictment, but quoted fairly copiously from it nonetheless. De Hoop Scheffer had set the tone from the start by opening his piece with a quotation from Hildebrand’s novel *Camera Obscura*, which gives a humorous portrayal of life and customs in early nineteenth-century Holland. Its author, Nicolaas Beets (1814-1903) used the occasion to contrast the arrival of the railway with the canalboat, in which “no one ... had ever had even one inspired thought”. “On the contrary: it is the deckhouse that provides the best ‘climate’ for all possible prejudices, and the best storing place for all obsolete concepts”.<sup>16</sup> This insinuation is unjust, which does not imply that the *Review* itself was above reproach.

The early beginnings of the *Review* were not without their problems. Six years passed between the legendary canalboat trip and the appearance of the first part, the publication of which was also delayed because on 20 September 1828, Theodorus Adrianus Clarisse (1795-1828), professor of Church History in Groningen and the man expected to join the *Review*’s three-man editorial team, died at the age of 33 years. An ‘In Memoriam’ written by his father Johannes Clarisse (1770-1846) was included in the first issue. It was not until 1911 that editorial duties would be entrusted to another Groningen scholar. Clarisse’s successor, Petrus Hofstede de Groot (1802-1886), succeeded in placing one contribution which prompted an immediate reprimand from Royaards.<sup>17</sup> The editorial team is to be credited for maintaining a fairly high degree of homogeneity. It was difficult for ‘outsiders’ to join the ranks of *Review* writers; no papers by the widely respected church historian of the calibre of Willem Moll (1812-1879), for instance, appeared in the *Review* until after his appointment to the editorial team in 1857.<sup>18</sup>

In their introduction to the first issue, Kist and Royaards lay out their motives. Firstly, they saw an increased interest in historical science in general, and secondly they envisaged the

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>16</sup> Hildebrand [= pen name of Nicolaas Beets], *Camera Obscura*, 5th edition (Haarlem, 1858), p. 90 (Amsterdam-Brussels: Elsevier, 1978, p. 109).

<sup>17</sup> P. Hofstede de Groot, “Beschouwing van den gang, dien de Christelijke Godegeleerdheid in het algemeen dus verre in Nederland heeft gehouden” [“Reflecting on the the Course Christian Theology in general has taken thus far in the Netherlands”], *Review* 2 (1842), 121-190; H.J. Royaards, “Brieven van Prof. P. Hofstede de Groot, over den gang der Christelijke Godegeleerdheid in Nederland” [“Letters written by Professor P. Hofstede de Groot concerning the Course of Christian Theology in the Netherlands”], *Review* 2 (1842), 329-382.

<sup>18</sup> This relates largely to the difficult relationship which existed between Kist and Moll; cf. J. Kamerling, *De kerkhistoricus Willem Moll - 1812-1879* [The Church Historian Willem Moll – 1812-1879] (Leeuwarden, 1979).

possibility of an independent place for church history somewhere between the theology disciplines and the other sciences. Time has shown that both observations were well-founded. Without doubt, we see that in the 19th century history studies grew and flourished, and that steps were taken to increase the professionalisation of the discipline as a whole.<sup>19</sup> The same is also true *mutatis mutandis* of church history in general, which was slowly but surely emancipating itself from systematic theology. History was no longer regarded primarily as a repository from which to prove the truth, or heretical character, of theological opinions.<sup>20</sup> On the basis of the *Organiek Besluit* (Organic Decree) of 1815, “church history” made its entry into the academy, and for the first time would-be clergymen took “church history” examinations within its walls. In 1823, Clarisse, Kist and Royaards were all appointed to the academic staff specifically to teach this subject. And thus an audience developed that was potentially interested in this new organ<sup>21</sup>, which was furthermore not allowed to be referred to as a periodical, on the grounds of the editors not wanting to commit themselves to producing issues of the *Review* on a regular basis. Thirty seven parts (see appendix) appeared under various names until 1900, and the editors themselves often played a large part in their production. Kist, for instance, contributed almost a hundred articles to the first twenty parts. A compact writing style was usually not the forte of the writers concerned, but the overall output was enormous.

---

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. P. den Boer, *Geschiedenis als beroep. De professionalisering van de geschiedbeoefening in Frankrijk - 1818-1914* [History as a Profession. The Professionalisation of History Studies in France - 1818-1914] (Nijmegen 1987).

<sup>20</sup> See the following studies, in particular, on the subject of church history studies in the Netherlands: B. ter Haar, *De historiographie der kerkgeschiedenis* [The Historiography of Church History] 3 pieces (Utrecht, 1870-1873); C. Sepp, *Proeve eener pragmatische geschiedenis der theologie in Nederland, sedert het laatst der vorige eeuw tot op onzen tijd [1787-1858]* [A Foretaste of a Pragmatic History of Theology in the Netherlands, from the End of the Last Century up to the Present Time] (Amsterdam, 1860); third (revised) edition: 1867; Sepp, *Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Kerkgeschiedschrijvers. Opgave van hetgeen Nederlanders over de geschiedenis der christelijk kerk geschreven hebben* [The Library of Dutch Church Historians. A Review of what Dutch People have written on the Subject of the History of the Christian Church] (Leiden, 1886); H. Bouman, *De godgeleerdheid en hare beoefenaars in Nederland gedurende het laatste gedeelte der vorige en in den loop der tegenwoordige eeuw* [Theology and Theology Scholars in the Netherlands during the Latter Part of the Last Century, and during the Course of the Present Century] (Utrecht, 1862) (a response to Sepp’s *Foretaste*); J.B.F. Heerspink, *De godgeleerdheid en hare beoefenaars aan de Hoogeschool te Groningen, gedurende het 250jarig bestaan der Akademie* [Theology and Theology Scholars at the Groningen Academy during the Course of its 250 Year Existence] 2 parts (1614-1752 & 1752-1864) (Groningen, 1864-1875); cf. K.M. Witteveen, *Daniel Gerdes* (Groningen, 1963).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. O.J. de Jong, “Het draagvlak voor de beoefening van de kerkgeschiedenis in Nederland” [“The Basis of the Study of Church History in the Netherlands”], in: P.H.A.M. Abels, N.D.B. Habermehl & A.P.F. Wouters, eds., *In en om de Sint-Jan. Bijdragen tot de Goudse kerkgeschiedenis* [In and around St. John’s. Contributions to the Church History of Gouda] (Delft, 1989), pp. 7-17.

The original and full name of the *Review* was *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, inzonderheid van Nederland* (*Church History Review, of the Netherlands in particular*). The aim was not solely to contribute to “a thorough knowledge and study of the History of Christianity”, but “primarily too” to relate this history “to our Fatherland”.<sup>22</sup> And these were no empty words. The large majority of the articles would be devoted to Dutch church history. The history of the Netherlands, and that of the “Dutch Church” were promptly and inextricably linked. And there can be no doubt at all about the church in question here: i.e. the Dutch Reformed Church. All contributions were presented in the Dutch language, even though the use of Latin within the University as such was still the norm. There were some Latin texts, of course, but these were mainly Latin sources. Apart from Dutch church history, there were other categories as well, although these specifications ended in 1854. I will keep my discussion of these categories brief, and focus on the first twenty issues only (i.e. the first two series).

The first category was the study of church history, within which methodological questions constitute the core. In the space of 20 years, a total of three articles appeared on this subject, two by Royaards and one by Kist. In the very first issue, Royaards discussed the progress being made in the field of church history, and later published an additional, and much shorter, article on how important it was for the discipline as a whole to have ready access to historic tracts, pamphlets, and church deed books.<sup>23</sup> Kist pleaded for a distinction to be made between the history of dogmas in its own right, on the one hand, and the study of the “history of Christian teaching”, on the other hand. The latter discipline, in his view, implied investigating “what happened to Christian teaching once it had become the property of human beings, and how various people regarded and practiced it”.<sup>24</sup> Kist wanted to make a clear distinction here between official church teaching, and how this teaching was received. Not only did he feel that there was a strong need to keep a watchful eye on the differences in time, but also on the

---

<sup>22</sup>. Kist & Royaards, “Foreword”, *Review* 1 (1829), v-xii, p. vii.

<sup>23</sup>. H.J. Royaards, “Over den voortgang van de beoefening der geschiedenis, ook van die der Christelijke Kerk” [“Progress in History Studies, as also those concerning the Christian Church”], *Review* 1 (1829), 3-82; Royaards, “Historische traktaatjes en Kerkelijke Acten-boeken in derzelven belang voor de Kerkelijke Geschiedenis” [“The Importance of Historical Tracts and Church Deed Books for Church History”], *Review* 1 (1829), 247-253.

<sup>24</sup>. N.C. Kist, “De Geschiedenis van de Leer des Christendoms, in betrekking tot Kerkelijke Geschiedenis en Geschiedenis der Leerstellingen, voorgesteld als afzonderlijk vak der godgeleerde historische wetenschap” [“The History of the Teaching of Christianity, with regard to Church History and the History of Dogmas and Doctrine, presented as a Separate Discipline of the Science of Historical Theology”], *Review* 4 (1833), 3-80, pp. 44f.



differences between peoples (or sections of the population).<sup>25</sup> Kist is thus adamant in his defence of an ethnographic approach.<sup>26</sup> Looking at the situation from an historical angle, Kist seems to suggest that he finds this approach, focusing as it does on the differences between peoples, more important than the history of dogmas and doctrines.<sup>27</sup>

The categorisation of “church history studies” was followed by a “general church history” category, which in terms of its scope, constituted a good second to Dutch church history. A much smaller category was the so-called “history of Christian teaching and writers”, which dealt specifically with dogmas and theological-historical subjects. Here we find a relatively large quantity of material on the 14th century Dutch preacher and mystic, Geert Groote (usually spelled ‘Groete’ by the church historians of the time), as well as pieces on the authenticity and the importance of the letters of Ignatius, on Jean Gerson (1363-1429), and a paper about the sect led by Jan Mazereeuw (ca. 1779-1855) in Opperdoes.<sup>28</sup> The Netherlands played an important role within this category. A number of contributions on subjects of a more current nature also appeared, including Royaard’s overview of theological papers published by Dutch Theological Societies.<sup>29</sup> The “cloisters” category which was added later, concentrated almost entirely on the Netherlands. I estimate that in the first twenty issues of the *Review*, all in all, two thirds to three quarters of the contributions related specifically to the Netherlands.

There were also a number of very small categories, such as canon law (five contributions in total), Christian archeology (three pieces on two subjects: the Feast of St. Nicholas and “investigations with respect to a certain Codex Psalmorum, kept in the Utrecht Library”)<sup>30</sup>, and

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 55: “There was no denial of the natural diversity which exists between people, nor in the way they approached Christianity. ... These diversities, however, and the various directions they took, were not dependent solely on the point in time, or the century, in which they manifested themselves; but much more on the totally different nature, character or circumstances of those different peoples who, having accepted Christianity, approached and developed it, each in their own way”.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 53; cf. Royaards, “Over den voortgang van de beoefening der geschiedenis” [“Progress in the Study of History”], p. 58, note 29.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> Attention was refocused on this subject in a later issue of the *Review*: J. Loosjes, “Jan Mazereeuw en zijn secte” [“Jan Mazereeuw and his Sect”], *Review* 15 (1919), 25-48.

<sup>29</sup> H.J. Royaards, “Overzicht der theologische geschriften door de in Nederland bestaande Godgeleerde Genootschappen” [“Overview of Theological Papers published by Theology Societies in the Netherlands”], *Review* 5 (1834), 217-306.

<sup>30</sup> W.A. van Hengel, “Sint Nicolaas en het Sint-Nicolaasfeest” [“St. Nicholas and the Feast of St. Nicholas”],

finally the somewhat more comprehensive “Announcements” category, which was apparently established as a means of keeping up-to-date with current developments and trends<sup>31</sup>, but which ultimately became the main gathering point for necrologies, and later also for biographical and bibliographical pieces on figures from the past, as well as miscellaneous items. There are no less than three articles on the Anabaptist leader, David Joris (1501-1556), and Kist showed no hesitation at all in giving information taken from a private letter on the moral and religious situation in Protestant parishes in the Dutch East Indies.<sup>32</sup>

A striking feature is that a new category was introduced in the fifth part. In their foreword, Kist and Royaards commented that it could never be the intention to include pieces on the history of non-Christian religions in the *Review*. But exceptions could be made - as they were quick to add - for the history of those religions, “which, in terms of their springing from Divine Revelation, bear a close relationship to the Christian religion or its history”.<sup>33</sup> It is evident that space had to be created for the discourse on the Samaritans presented by H.A. Hamaker (1789-1835).<sup>34</sup> We find, in addition, only two reasonably comparable essays: one by H.E. Weijers (1805-1844) on Job Ludolf (1624-1704), the famous scholar of Ethiopian literature and history<sup>35</sup>, and one by the Groningen professor, N.W. Schroeder (1721-1798) “On

---

*Review* 3 (1831), 753-798; W.H.J. van Westreenen van Tiellandt, “Naspeuringen nopens zekeren Codex Psalmorum, in de Utrechtsche Boekerij berustende” [“Investigations in respect of a certain Codex Psalmorum, kept in the Utrecht Library”], *Review* 4 (1833), 231-246; J. Geel, “Brief” [“Letter” - written in response to van Westreenen’s contribution], *Review* 4 (1833), 247-252.

<sup>31</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Voorrede” [“Foreword”], *Review* 1 (1829), viii-ix: “berigten of mededeelingen, den tegenwoordigen toestand en lotgevallen des Christendoms, of merkwaardige sterfgevallen, betreffende” [“News or Announcements concerning the Present Situation and Vicissitudes of Christianity, or Strange Deaths”].

<sup>32</sup> A.M. Cramer, “Levensbeschrijving van David Joris” [“A Biography of David Joris”], *Review* 5 (1845), 1-145; Cramer, “Bijvoegselen tot de levensbeschrijving van David Joris” [“Additions to the Story of David Joris’s Life”], *Review* 6 (1846), 289-368; I. van Harderwijk, “Bijdrage tot de kennis der schriften van David Joris” [“Contribution to Knowledge surrounding the Writings of David Joris”], *Review* 7 (1847), 393-411; N.C. Kist, “Iets over den zedelijken en godsdienstigen toestand der Protestantsche Gemeenten in Nederlandsch Oost-Indië” [“Something about the Moral and Religious Situation in Protestant Parishes in the Dutch East Indies”], *Review* 10 (1839), 330-339.

<sup>33</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Voorrede” [“Foreword”], *Review* 5 (1834), v-viii, p. vi.

<sup>34</sup> H.A. Hamaker, “Aanmerking over de Samaritanen, en hunne briefwissing met eenige Europeesche geleerden: ter gelegenheid der uitgave van eenen nog onbekenden Samaritaanschen Brief” [“Comments on the Samaritans, and their Exchange of Letters with European Scholars; on the Occasion of the Publication of an - up to that time - unknown Samaritan Letter”], *Review* 5 (1834), 1-56.

<sup>35</sup> H.E. Weijers, “Iets over Job Ludolf, den beroemden beoefenaar der Ethiopische letterkunde en geschiedenis” [“Some Comments on Job Ludolf, the Famous Scholar of Ethiopian Literature and History”], *Review* 9 (1838), 377-

the causes behind the origins and establishment of the Mohammedan Religion among the Arabs”<sup>36</sup>. There was no further explanation as to why these two pieces were actually included - both, after all, were more appropriate to the field of Oriental Studies, and all three contributions were included in the “general church history” category. In that sense, it is somewhat surprising that the editors talked about the introduction of a new category, whilst looking at the actual categorisation, they were only concerned about extending an already existing category.

It was not easy to be consistent in categorizing the various contributions, and perhaps that, in itself, explains why at a certain point they decided to discontinue the categorization practice altogether.<sup>37</sup> Putting subject matters into appropriate categories is always problematical - both internally and externally. Even within what should be the ‘flagship’ of Dutch church history, it was still difficult to define its boundaries in view of history of religions in the broad sense. There were some periodicals, which did incorporate both fields - and they did so emphatically. The German *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* - a not insignificant reference point for the *Review*<sup>38</sup> - covers the whole history of human religious development. It is claimed that only when we are truly familiar with this history, can we fully understand the historical meaning of Christianity.<sup>39</sup> The relationship between the history of religion in general, and the history of Christianity in particular, constituted - and, I would like to add, still constitutes - a real problem for scholars. As a principle, the history of Christianity is usually seen as part of the history of religion, or of historical theology<sup>40</sup>, but in practice both parties had vested interests in stressing the individuality and independence of their own disciplines. The element of

---

472.

<sup>36</sup>. The Dutch title can be found in the List of Contents; actually it concerns a Latin text “Oratio de causis fundatae et stabilitae inter Arabes religionis Mohammedicae” (1767) by N.G. Schroeder, *Review* 9 (1849), 7-30.

<sup>37</sup>. From 1857 onwards there was no further categorization of subject matters.

<sup>38</sup>. Kist & Royaards, “Voorrede” [“Foreword”], *Review* 5 (1834), vi.

<sup>39</sup>. *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie*. In Verbindung mit der historisch-theologischen Gesellschaft zu Leipzig herausgegeben von Christian Friedrich Illgen, 1 (1832), Vorrede.

<sup>40</sup>. Two examples: H.J. Royaards, *Compendium historiae ecclesiae christianae* (Utrecht, 1840), part 1, p. 2: “Partem hujus Historiae Religionis universae continet *Historia Religionis et Ecclesiae Christianae*, inquirens in fata doctrinae illius monotheisticae, divinitus patefactae, quam Christus docuit Israelitas, in mediis gentibus polytheisticis viventes, et jam per multa saecula Monotheismi vindices, quamque Ejus Apostoli per orbem terrarum propagarunt” (italics in the original); J.I. Doedes, *Encyclopedie der christelijke godgeleerdheid* [Encyclopedia of Christian Religion] (Utrecht, 1883), pp. 93-154.

individuality attached to the field of history of religion, or - as it is often referred to - the science of religion, has proved to be a much greater problem in the course of time than that of the history of Christianity.<sup>41</sup> That need not, however, jeopardize joint practical and productive efforts.

A good 19th century example of a joint venture was the decision to publish a series bearing the title: *De voornaamste godsdiensten* (*The principal religions*). The plans were wrought by the publisher A.C. Kruseman (1818-1894), and in the period 1863-1884, eight books in the series were published, including studies on Buddhism, Islam, the religion of ancient Israel, the religion of the Vikings, in addition to two parts on the history of Protestantism and Catholicism. It was the intention right from the start that Christianity would also be included in the series. In this context, the authors of both parts - the Protestant theologian Lodewijk W.E. Rauwenhoff (1828-1889) and Allard Pierson (1831-1896) stressed that they did not want to focus on church history, but wanted instead to present the history of Protestantism and Catholicism respectively *as a form of religious life*.<sup>42</sup> They rejected a fixation on church institutions and official teaching. Both Rauwenhoff and Pierson believed that including Christianity in a book series on the history of religion meant that it would inevitably contain a clear difference in perspective. Pierson also emphasized what he believed to be two unavoidable conditions which any worthwhile study of Catholicism would have to satisfy. Firstly, one would have to stand above the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism, and furthermore - although this is equally true of all religions - one would have to be devoid of any rationalistic persuasions which “would only want to judge” religions “according to the yardstick of logic”.<sup>43</sup>

But let us go back to the first half of the 19th century, back to the early days of the *Review*. Royaards and Kist began their enterprise not on the basis of a methodological

---

<sup>41</sup> A.L. Molendijk, “Introduction”, in: Molendijk & P. Pels., eds., *Religion in the Making. The Emergence of the Sciences of Religion* (Leiden, 1998), pp. 1-27, here pp. 13f.

<sup>42</sup> L.W.E. Rauwenhoff, *De geschiedenis van het protestantisme* [The History of Protestantism] 3 parts (Haarlem, 1865-1871), part 1, p. 42; A. Pierson, *De Geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme, tot op het Concilie van Trente* [The History of Roman Catholicism, up to the Council of Trent], 4 parts (Haarlem, 1868-1872), part 1, pp. 9-10; cf. A.L. Molendijk, “The Principal Religions. A Landmark in the Early Study of Religion in the Netherlands”, *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 54 (2000), 18-34. On Rauwenhoff, see P.L. Slis, *L.W.E. Rauwenhoff (1828-1889). Apologeet van het modernisme* [Rauwenhoff. Apologist of Modernism], Kampen 2003.

<sup>43</sup> Pierson, *De Geschiedenis van het Roomsche Katholicisme*, p. 45; cf. p. 46 : “Een godsdienst wil geheel uit haarzelve beoordeeld worden” [“A Religion will want to be judged solely from within itself”]; cf. P.G.J.M. Raedts, “Veroordeeld tot vrijheid. Pierson en het katholicisme” [“Sentenced to Freedom. Pierson and Catholicism”], *De Negentiende Eeuw* [The 19th Century] 19 (1997), 5-15.

programme; it seems likely that they envisaged a combination of source publications and “compositional”<sup>44</sup> pieces.<sup>45</sup> Perhaps they differed too much in themselves to be able to reach a consensus on this. To quote J. Lindeboom once again: “The somewhat down-to-earth, intellectualistic Kist opted too often for the one-sidedness of unattractive publication of documents and sources – ‘many sources but very dry’ - whilst Royaards leaned more towards an excess of what people would later refer to as ‘ideengeschichtliche’ constructions”.<sup>46</sup> I have not, however, been able to find many such ‘constructions’ in his work, or perhaps they lie more in his systematic reflections. The very first paper Royaards published in the *Review*, looked at how the discipline was actually practiced, and culminated in a defence of a so-called “pragmatic” study of history.

We have to be careful with that word “pragmatic” because it had different dimensions of meaning at the time, as is clearly apparent in Royaard’s piece. In the 18th and 19th centuries, it was a purely methodological term used within the sciences. The philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), for instance, developed an Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view, within which both the prevailing differences between people and their implications for daily life, were discussed. Within the field of history studies, the terms can be traced back to Thucydides and Polybius, and in the 18th and early 19th centuries, such terms usually referred to a form of historiography, which distinguished itself from being a purely reporting approach. Two features catch the eye immediately: (1) the pragmatic study of history attempted primarily to provide insight into cohesion and structures, by unravelling the threads of cause and consequence, and (2) the claim was made that the constructed image of history was highly informative and instructive, and even useful for modern man.<sup>47</sup>

Historiography often sees Johann Lorenz Mosheim (ca. 1694-1755) as the father of

---

<sup>44</sup>. The term “componerend” was used by Lindeboom, “Honderd jaren” [A Hundred Years], p. 202.

<sup>45</sup>. Kist & Royaards, “Voorrede” [“Foreword”], *Review* 1 (1829), ix: “We hoped to be of service, by means of historical research and historical presentation especially, and particularly by contributing building material for History. We hope, to the best of our ability, to be able to satisfy this wish partly by publishing ... articles and essays, and partly by presenting records and authentic documents, as well as placing announcements and shorter papers”.

<sup>46</sup>. Lindeboom, “Honderd Jaren”, pp. 203f.

<sup>47</sup>. G. Kühne-Bertram, “Aspekte der Geschichte und der Bedeutungen des Begriffs ‘pragmatisch’ in den philosophischen Wissenschaften des ausgehenden 18. und des 19. Jahrhunderts”, *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 27 (1983), 158-186.

modern church history. It was he who took the pragmatic method from political historiography, and looked specifically for causes.<sup>48</sup> The pragmatic way of studying history has been criticised in many quarters, one reason being that it gives the researcher carte blanche in terms of subjectivity.<sup>49</sup> There was, and is, continued disagreement about what the pragmatic method actually comprised, and which of the church historians actually used it. There is no quick and easy way of unravelling these tangled threads. In the Netherlands, a disputation in dialogue-form on this subject, held at the beginning of the 19th century, and written by the Frisian theologian and later Leiden University professor, Elias Annes Borger (1784-1820), made a lasting impression.<sup>50</sup> The pragmatic method did not automatically preclude a call on Providence, indeed Royaards formulated it in these famous words: “agit in ecclesia homo, in religione Deus”.<sup>51</sup>

Royaards also allowed the essence of the pragmatic approach to manifest itself well, by providing a broad overview of the study of history in its totality, within which he distinguished three different stadia. In his view, it all began with myths and fables, from which - slowly but surely – history in the proper sense of the word emerged. On the lowest level, merely pronouncements were made, “without researching whether or not they are *true*”.<sup>52</sup> And that is what Royaards referred to as the “chronicle-type” of history study.<sup>53</sup> It is at the point at which

---

<sup>48</sup> J.L. Mosheim, *Institutionum historiae ecclesiasticae antiquae et recentioris* (Helmstedt, 1764) (first edition: 1755), p. 6 (= Praepar., par. XII): “non tantum *quid gestum sit*, sed etiam *quare hoc vel illud evenit*, declarare, id est, *eventa cum causis suis conjungere oportet*” (italics as in the original); cf. E.P. Meijering, *Die Geschichte der christlichen Theologie im Urteil J.L. von Mosheims* (Amsterdam, 1995), pp. 32ff.

<sup>49</sup> F.C. Baur, *Die Epochen der kirchlichen Geschichtschreibung* (Tübingen, 1852), pp. 166f.

<sup>50</sup> E.A. Borger, *Disputatio de historia pragmatica. Accedit oratio de historiae doctore, providentiae divinae administro* (Hagae Comitum, 1818) (appeared originally in 1815 under the title: *De officiis historici in praefaciendis opinionibus* [Haarlem, 1815]); cf. C. van der Woude, *Elias Annes Borger (1784-1820). Een geleerde-leven in het begin der 19e eeuw* [A Scholarly Life at the Beginning of the 19th Century] (Kampen, s.a.); Ter Haar, *Bibliographie*, part I, p. 5, and Sepp, *Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Kerkgeschiedschrijvers* [Library of Dutch Church Historiographers], p. 6. On Sepp’s influence, see Aart de Groot, “Het vroegnegentiende-eeuwse protestantisme in de visie van Chr. Sepp” [“Early 19th Century Protestantism as viewed by Chr. Sepp”], in: J.H. van de Bank, et. al., *Theologie en kerk in het tijdperk van de Camera Obscura. Studies over het Nederlandse protestantisme in de eerste helft van de negentiende eeuw* [Theology and Church in the Camera Obscura era. Studies of Dutch Protestantism in the first half of the 19th century] (Utrecht, 1993), pp. 11-19.

<sup>51</sup> Quoted from Sepp, *Bibliotheek van Nederlandsche Kerkgeschiedschrijvers* [Library of Dutch Church Historiographers], p. 8.

<sup>52</sup> Royaards, “Over den voortgang van de beoefening der geschiedenis” [“Progress in History Studies”], p. 25 (italics as in the original).

<sup>53</sup> Royaards is not completely clear on this point. On the one hand, it seems to be a phase that historiography in the meantime had left behind, and on the other hand a critical “chronicle-type” method has enduring value in its own

people start to distinguish between fables and legends, on the one hand, and reality, on the other hand, that a critical and scientific approach to history can begin. We are given descriptions of what had actually happened. The pragmatic study of history developed when people became interested in the sequence and cohesion of factual events, and then started to pose questions about cause and consequence. That history is subjected to pragmatical study does not only mean that people focus on the (causal) cohesion of events, but also that this approach is both practical and relevant. This approach is “important for all subjects and social ranks”, because it had now become “the teacher of all people”.<sup>54</sup> The pragmatical study of history is an important advancement, not only from the scientific point of view, but also, and especially, from the viewpoint of civilisation. Or to put it more precisely: this approach only makes its entry when civilisation has reached a certain level.<sup>55</sup>

We meet this same degree of progress in the field of church historiography which, according to Royaards, began with Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 263-339), and found its provisional pragmatic fulfilment in the studies carried out by Mosheim and Johann Matthias Schröck (1733-1808). Much happened in between, of course, but the works of the 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries were produced very much under the yoke of the ever-present dogmatic and church political polemics which divided Catholicism from Protestantism.<sup>56</sup> Royaards saw Germany as the centre of a flourishing historiography, although he also felt that things were progressing well in the Netherlands too.<sup>57</sup>

Was that really the case, however? Did the *Review* itself, for instance, satisfy the

---

right (so long as it is not the only method used); cf. Royaards, “Over de voortgang”, p. 29.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 50; cf. Royaards, “Foreword”, in: *Archief voor kerkelijke en wereldsche geschiedenissen, inzonderheid van Utrecht* [Review of Ecclesiastical and Secular Histories, of Utrecht in particular], published by J.J. Dodt van Flensburg (Utrecht, 1838), pp. i-viii, here p.ii. Only the search for causes is mentioned here. On Royaards, see F.G.M. Broeyer, “H.J. Royaards (1794-1854) en de kerkgeschiedenis van zijn vaderstad Utrecht” [“H.J. Royaards (1794-1854) and the Church History of his Birthplace Utrecht”] in: J.H. van de Bank, et. al., *Theologie en kerk in het tijdperk van de Camera Obscura* [Theology and Church in the Camera Obscura era], pp. 137-156; F.G.M. Broeyer, “H.J. Royaards, de vakbroeder van N.C. Kist” [“H.J. Royaards, the confrère of N.C. Kist”], in: A. de Groot and O.J. de Jong, eds., *Vier eeuwen theologie in Utrecht. Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de theologische faculteit aan de Universiteit Utrecht* [Four Centuries of Theology in Utrecht. Contributions to the History of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Utrecht] (Zoetermeer, 2001), pp. 175-184.

<sup>56</sup> Royaards, “Over den voortgang”, p. 65.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 74, pointed to the work of Herman Venema (1697-1787) and Wilhelm Broes (1766-1853).

proposed ideals? The philosophical slant of the pragmatic method, on which Royaards put so much emphasis, seems to conflict with the other premise: namely, to primarily present articles based on comprehensively researched sources. Although Royaards was occasionally not averse to closing a contribution with a few “tips for our times”<sup>58</sup>, the *Review* was not what one would call a *Fundgrube* for the lessons of life. Kist and Royaards were perhaps aware of this problem, and it would seem from their defensive attitude towards it, that others at least, and probably they themselves too, had moments of considerable doubt about whether the two points of view could be reconciled. In the Foreword of the tenth number in the *Review* series, they focused attention on the fact that the main purpose was to draw from sources and “to penetrate as far as possible to the roots”. They were pleased then that they had managed to “believe the often fostered opinion, as if there was some kind of struggle between historic pragmatism and sharp investigation, or even to presenting finely-detailed accounts of - sometimes seemingly less important - historical events”.<sup>59</sup>

Pragmatism was for Kist and Rooyaards much more than simply a way of approaching a subject. It was, in fact, their credo, and this will explain their enduring defence of it. This credo had its roots in their student days in Utrecht, where the star of the classical scholar and philosopher, Philip Willem van Heusde (1778-1839), shone brightly in the academic firmament. It was not for nothing that he was known as the *praeceptor Hollandiae*, in much the same way as the reformer, Philippus Melancthon (1497-1560), was carried on the wings of his *praeceptor Germaniae* title. One did not shy away from grand comparisons in those days. From a certain distance, the modern theologian Jan Hendrik Scholten (1811-1885) was able to write that van Heusde was, as it were, the idol of his students.<sup>60</sup> That must have been primarily a result of the personality of the man, although it is difficult nowadays to comprehend his charisma on the basis of his writings. The historian, Johan Huizinga (1872-1945), characterized these writings in

---

<sup>58</sup>. H.J. Royaards, “Begrip en omvang van de kerkhervorming der zestiende eeuw, in vergelijking met de hervorming in de middeleeuwen; volgens de geschiedenis” [“Understanding Church Reformation in the 16th Century, and its Extent, in comparison with Reformation in the Middle Ages; according to History”] *Review* 1 (1841), 3-89, here p. 59.

<sup>59</sup>. Kist & Royaards, “Voorberigt” [“Foreword”], *Review* 10 (1840), v-xii, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>60</sup>. J.H. Scholten, “Levensberigt van Herman Johan Royaards” [“An Account of the Life of Herman Johan Royaards”], in: *Handelingen en Levensberigten der jaarlijksche algemeene vergadering van de Maatschappij van Nederlandsche Letterkunde* [Actions and Announcements of the Annual General Meeting of the Society of Dutch Literature] (1854), 50-66, here p. 51. Scholten had also studied under van Heusde.



his history of Groningen University as: “long-winded and ‘sugarly’ sentimental, colourless and plain, sadly lacking in penetration, full of the most tame, quasi-‘impacting’ wisdom, which in fact delivered no wisdom at all”.<sup>61</sup> This may be true, but there is no doubt nonetheless that van Heusde exerted immense influence in his time. That is not only true - as we know - for the “Groningen School” of theologians<sup>62</sup>, but also for Kist and Royaards themselves.

They dedicated the third part of the *Review* to their “honourable teacher and friend, the justifiably renowned and esteemed van Heusde”.<sup>63</sup> This dedication was, no doubt, to a large extent, politically motivated. These were sad and difficult times, as Kist and Royaards had already indicated in December 1830 - a time when many of their dearest friends and students “had exchanged their literary studies for weapons”.<sup>64</sup> It was the time of the Belgian Revolt and the so-called “10-Day Campaign”. Now - a year later - the editors welcomed the “glorious return from the army of our noble academic youth”.<sup>65</sup> Van Heusde functioned, in this connection, as a kind of unifying icon between the Fatherland and Science. The conflict with Belgium was not only political and military, but was also described in terms of scientific sophistication. Whilst vandals in Belgium were destroying printing presses, which were producing nothing more than daily newspapers and reprints, a great deal of material of lasting value was being printed in the Netherlands. “A powerful spirit has awakened, in order - in this sense too - to restore and sustain the good name of the Netherlands, despite the endeavours of others to malign it”.<sup>66</sup>

After van Heusde’s death in 1839, Kist and Royaards again dedicated a few words to his

---

<sup>61</sup> J. Huizinga, “Geschiedenis der universiteit gedurende de derde eeuw van haar bestaan” [“The History of the University during the Third Century of its Existence”] in: *Academia Groningana. Gedenkboek ter gelegenheid van het derde eeuwfeest der Universiteit te Groningen uitgegeven in opdracht van den academischen senaat* [Commemorative Book commissioned by the Academic Senate on the Occasion of the 300th Anniversary of the Founding of Groningen University] (Groningen, 1914), pp. 1-238, here p. 80.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. J. Vree, *De Groninger Godgeleerden. De oorsprongen en de eerste periode van hun optreden (1820-1843)* [The Groningen Theologians. The Origins and the Early Period of their Work (1820-1843)] (Kampen, 1984) pp. 40ff.; E.H. Cossee, *Verwantschap en verwijdering. De Groninger godgeleerden en het Unitarisme* [Affinity and Alienation. The Groningen Theologians and Unitarianism] (inaugural address Groningen) [Groningen, 1992].

<sup>63</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Aan den Lezer” [“To the Reader”], *Review* 3 (1831). This 4-page piece is not numbered; this quote can be found on the first page.

<sup>64</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Voorberigt” [“Foreword”], *Review* 2 (1830), v-ix, p. vii.

<sup>65</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Aan den Lezer” [“To the Reader”], *Review* 3 (1831), [second page].

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, [third page].

memory in the *Review*. “Van Heusde is no longer with us. And in him, for whom the whole of the Netherlands mourns, whose death for the Kingdom of Literature and Science, yes for the higher interests of mankind, is such a painful loss, we have lost a warm-hearted friend and, as far as the *Review* is concerned, not only an interested reader, but also a trusted guide and adviser”.<sup>67</sup> Rhetoric? - certainly, but not solely. What is particularly interesting is that they delivered such high praise of van Heusde’s genius as an historiography inspirator. Both editors saw it as their task to adapt van Heusde’s general historical insights to church historiography and thus “to enable one prominent branch of theological science ... to become part of the overall advancement”.<sup>68</sup> What were these insights exactly? Firstly, the historical pragmatism. Royaards once delivered a speech on van Heusde as an historian, in which he stressed that what mattered to van Heusde above all was that his work applied to life itself. *Historia magistra vitae*. The intellectual and moral perfection of himself and others - that was van Heusde’s aim in life.<sup>69</sup> In this sense, he saw no conflict between his platonistically-inspired humanism and Christianity. History always reveals flaws and omissions, and is ultimately a learning ground from which to embark towards an humanity that is truly Christian. Huizinga referred to van Heusde as “the last-born prophet of the level rationalism and the optimistic humaneness of the 18th century”.<sup>70</sup> Clearly not Huizinga’s ‘cup of tea’.

Van Heusde had been influenced by Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), and was especially interested in the history of humanity in mankind.<sup>71</sup> Important differences between the various peoples are to be noted here. This is the background to Kist’s and Royaards’ conviction that an ethnographical treatment is to be preferred above a chronological approach. Different peoples can find themselves at different levels of development at any given point in time. Van Heusde repeatedly used the image of the

---

<sup>67</sup>. Kist & Royaards, “Voorberigt” [“Foreword”], *Review* 10 (1840), vii.

<sup>68</sup>. *Ibid.*, p. viii.

<sup>69</sup>. H.J. Royaards, *Ph. Will. van Heusde geschetst als geschiedkundige en als paedagoog tot de godgeleerdheid* [Ph. Will. van Heusde sketched as Historian and as Pedagogue in Theology] (Utrecht, 1840), pp. 48f.; cf. Kist, *Memoriam Heusdii cum discipulis recoluit* (Leiden, 1839).

<sup>70</sup>. Huizinga, “Geschiedenis der universiteit” [“The History of the University”], p. 80.

<sup>71</sup>. Ph.W. van Heusde, *De school van Polybius of geschiedkunde voor de negentiende eeuw* [The Polybius School or History for the 19th Century] [published by his son J.A.C. van Heusde] (Amsterdam, 1841), p. 247.

age of peoples, and applied it as a systematic principle for history. Whilst the Greeks, for instance, were still in their adolescent phase, the Germanic races were an obvious example of adulthood. In his posthumous publication *De School van Polybius (The Polybius School)*, van Heusde saw himself confronted with the question of whether or not mankind was about to enter old age. He assured his listeners, however, that the human race was still a long way from its ultimate destination: it could be centuries, or possibly millenia, he said, before we actually reach that point.<sup>72</sup>

In line with Herder, van Heusde believed that the spirit of Christianity had revealed itself in its purest form in the Germanic world.<sup>73</sup> And that was not all, because in the Netherlands especially we have seen the development of an extraordinary sense of morality and religion, simplicity and common sense. Having pointed to the exceptionally good schools in Groningen as proof of the excellent capacities inherent in our nation, van Heusde suddenly turned his eye towards 14th century Overijssel where, thanks to Geert Groote: “the light of knowledge and science was lit for the first time in the dark night of ignorance”. All things considered, here surely lie the roots of the Reformation. “What could Luther or Erasmus have done if, in their times, Saxonia and the Low Countries had been as uneducated and uncouth as they were in the time before Geert Groete?”<sup>74</sup> According to this vision, the civilisation of a people and a sense of religion, go hand in hand, whereby names such as Geert Groote, Erasmus (1469-1536), Thomas a Kempis (1379/80-1471), Wessel Gansfort (1420-1489) and Rudolf Agricola (1444-1485) guarantee the exceptional character of the Dutch nation.

Within this historiographical tradition which, by the way, has older roots, it was quite possible to regard Calvinists as foreign intruders on our national soil.<sup>75</sup> The (late) Middle Ages thus became a subject of interest. We see this in Kist and Royaards, but especially in subsequent

---

<sup>72</sup>. Ibid., p. 253.

<sup>73</sup>. See P.T. van Rooden for this formulation, “Het Nederlands protestantisme en zijn vaderland” [“Dutch Protestantism and its Fatherland”], in: J.M.M. de Valk, ed., *Nationale identiteit in Europees perspectief* [National Identity from a European Perspective] (Baarn, 1993), pp. 95-115, p. 102.

<sup>74</sup>. Ph.W. van Heusde, *Brieven over den aard en de strekking van Hooger Onderwijs* [Letters on the Nature and Intent of Higher Education] 4th edition (Utrecht, 1856), p. 27.

<sup>75</sup>. Van Rooden, “Het Nederlands protestantisme”, pp. 102f.; Van Rooden, *Religieuze regimes. Over godsdienst en maatschappij in Nederland, 1570-1990* [Religious Regimes. On Religion and Society in the Netherlands 1570-1990] (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 147-168.

generations of church historians, such as Willem Moll, J.G.R. Acquoy (1829-1896), and F. Pijper (1859-1926).<sup>76</sup> Kist had an eye for Christian art and wrote pieces, for instance, on the “Stabat Mater” and the frescos in St. Peter’s Church in Leiden.<sup>77</sup> Above all, both editors defended the superiority of a Germanic Christianity.<sup>78</sup> Kist also wrote about the Germanic origins of church reform<sup>79</sup> and Royaards commented that “not only the intellectual principle, but also a higher, the moral principle, came to maturity” in the Germanic peoples.<sup>80</sup> This is clearly an evolutionistic perspective. Within the development of history, Christianity represents the indisputable, moral high point. The intention of the Reformation was not, as many wrongly thought (including the Reformers themselves), a turning back to how things were at the start of Christian teaching and the Christian church, but much more a question of “taking a new path towards giving a new impulse to the teaching of Christianity”.<sup>81</sup> The role played by the Netherlands in this process should not be overlooked. And it was in this light, therefore, that Kist felt called repeatedly to defend the Dutch origin of the Zwinglian teaching on communion.<sup>82</sup>

In this vision, Roman Catholicism acted largely as a contrast - a contrast that accentuated

---

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Lindeboom, “Honderd jaren” [“A Hundred Years”], pp. 206f.

<sup>77</sup> Kist, “Iets over den Hymnus: Stabat Mater dolorosa. Naar aanleiding van een HS. van denzelven, voorkomende in eenen codex der werken van S. Bernardus” [“A Few Comments about the Hymnus : Stabat Mater Dolorosa. As the Result of a Manuscript of the same, appearing in a certain Codex of Works by S. Bernardus”], *Review* 3 (1831), 491-502; Kist, “Iets over de hier te lande kortelings ontdekte Middeleeuwsche Muurschilderijen, bijzonder over die in de Pieters-Kerk te Leiden” [“A Few Comments about the Medieval Frescos recently discovered here, particularly those in the Church of St. Peter in Leiden”], *Review* 6 (1846), 419-476 (illustrated).

<sup>78</sup> Lindeboom stressed this point, “Honderd jaren”, pp. 206f.

<sup>79</sup> *Review* 1 (1841), 610-164.

<sup>80</sup> H.J. Royaards, “Begrip en omvang van de kerkhervorming der zestiende eeuw” [“Understanding the Church Reformation in the 16th Century”], *Review* 1 (1841), p. 3.

<sup>81</sup> Kist, “De Geschiedenis van de Leer des Christendoms” [“The History of the Teaching of Christianity”], p. 72.

<sup>82</sup> Kist, “De Nederlandsche oorsprong der Zwingliaanse Avondmaalsleer” [“The Dutch Origin of the Zwinglian Teaching on Holy Communion”], *Review* 2 (1842), 114-119; Kist, “Nog iets over den Nederlandschen oorsprong der zoogenaamde Zwingliaanse Avondmaalsleer” [“More Comment on the Dutch Origin of the so-called Zwinglian Teaching on Holy Communion”], *Review* 3 (1843), 385-402. It would be interesting to study this historiographical tradition even further. The Groningen church historian A. Ypey had already defended the thesis that it was the Netherlands that prepared the way for the reformation; cf. J. Kamerling, “De kerkhistoricus Annaeus Ypey (1760-1837). Nuance, vooroordeel en veroordeling” [“The Church Historian, Annaeus Ypey (1760-1837). Nuance, Bias and Condemnation”], *Review* 55 (1974-1975), 192-236, pp. 220-224 in particular. Ypey also defended the premise of the pragmatist historiography; cf. Ypey, *Geschiedenis van de Kristelijke Kerk in de achttiende eeuw* [The History of the Christian Church in the 18th Century] (Utrecht, 12 parts 1797-1815), part I, pp. 2-3. On Ypey see also van Rooden, *Religieuze Regimes* [Religious Regimes], pp. 153-162.

even more sharply the individuality of Germanic Protestantism, on the grounds that it was among these barbarian Germanic hordes - the words are Kist's - that the realisation of the "inadequacy ... of the whole outward appearance of Religion, as imposed by the Roman church" was awakened.<sup>83</sup> Catholicism, ritualistic and extrovert, versus Protestantism, introvert and pious. This belief in Protestant superiority also led, from time to time, to virulent anti-Papist and anti-Catholic sentiments. Kist, for instance, allowed the publication of a speech given by the Superior General of the Jesuits, Joh. Roothaan (1785-1853)<sup>84</sup>, taking the opportunity at the same time to throw doubt on its authenticity. Kist justified his actions as follows: although the speech itself may not be correct, it does nonetheless represent an accurate image of the Jesuits.<sup>85</sup>

Kist later published his discourse in the *Review* on the assumed existence of a female Pope in the 9th century - Popess Joan - "with the entire mess of the legend" that surrounded her.<sup>86</sup> He aimed his arrows primarily at the voids in the evidence produced by those who had attempted to refute the Joan legend. He was not, however, able to produce any real evidence or new facts, as was demonstrated by J.H. Wensing (1808-1880), professor at the Roman Catholic Major Seminary in Warmond in his 600 page essay.<sup>87</sup> In a somewhat arrogant response - Kist did not seem to understand that someone of the stature of a seminary professor would have had the temerity to attack his view - Kist showed that he was clearly not impressed. He was obviously on the defence, however, when he commented, "that in your dialectically-sophisticated discourse, and contrary to your own intention, you put weights on precisely the scale you had not intended, and thereby strengthened the evidence that there really had been a Popess Joan". Kist went a step further, by suggesting that even if his piece had produced nothing

---

<sup>83</sup>. Kist, "De geschiedenis van de leer des christendoms" ["The History of the Teaching of Christianity"], p. 71.

<sup>84</sup>. C.J. Ligthart, *De Nederlandsche Jezuitengeneraal Jan Philip Roothaan* [The Dutch Superior General of the Jesuits, Jan Philip Roothaan] (Nijmegen, 1972).

<sup>85</sup>. Kist, "Het derde eeuwfeest der Jesuiten-Orde" ["The Third Centenary Celebrations of the Jesuit Order"], *Review* 10 (1840), 359-378, p. 377 (and pp. 398-399). Kist later published the genuine piece: "Het derde eeuwfeest der Jesuiten-Orde", *Review* 2 (1842), 297-309, p. 309: "we fear that the *fictitious* Allocution would provide no less truth than the *genuine* letter" (italics as in the original).

<sup>86</sup>. Kist, "De pausin Joanna (Eene aanwijzing, dat het onderzoek harer geschiedenis nog geenszins afgedaan of gesloten is)" ["The Female Pope Joan (A Sign that the Study of her History is Far from Complete or Closed)"], *Review* 3 (1843), 1-96 (and 97-112).

<sup>87</sup>. J.H. Wensing, *De verhandeling van N.C. Kist ... over de pausin Joanna* [N.C. Kist's Discourse on the Female Pope Joan] (The Hague, 1845).

else “than that from the Roman clergy of the Netherlands, from whom we hear so little in the sciences, someone had at last been provoked to carry out an historical study”, his purpose would have been satisfied.<sup>88</sup> The pious hope with which Kist brought his rebuff to a close - i.e. that they might both see the day when in “a brotherly tone” they would be able to exchange views on more important matters than the female Pope Joan - did not deter him from publishing even more documents in support of his viewpoint, in later issues of the *Review*.<sup>89</sup>

On the Protestant side, it was extremely difficult to admit error in this matter. Even in his critically formulated commemorative article, Lindeboom was still able to speak of Kist’s “excellent” paper.<sup>90</sup> And this whilst the inaccuracy of Kist’s standpoint would have been fairly obvious even in his own time. J.M. Schröck’s *Manual*, to which Dutch church historians frequently referred, also speaks of a legend.<sup>91</sup> And J.J.I. von Döllinger (1799-1890) was also to state, quite coolly, that among reputable historians in Germany, none had been found who attached any belief to the story.<sup>92</sup> The Catholic politician and theologian, Hermanus Johannes Aloysius Maria Schaepman (1844-1903) was then able to claim, and with a certain degree of triumphalism, that: “The aberration is tenacious and the hate never dies, but people in the Netherlands will never dare to talk of Popess Joan again, other than in dark corners and in whispered tones, appropriate to bad words”.<sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup>. N.C. Kist, “Een woord van N.C. Kist aan J.H. Wensing, professor in het R.K. Seminarie te Warmond, betreffende zijn geschrift over de Pausin Joanna” [“A Word from N.C. Kist to J.H. Wensing, Professor in the R.C. Seminary in Warmond, concerning his Paper on the Popess Joan”], *Review* 5 (1845), 459-552, pp. 472-474.

<sup>89</sup>. [Kist], “Een nog onvermeld getuigenis van Phillippus Bergomas aangaande ‘Pausin Joanna’” [“An as yet Unmentioned Witness from Phillippus Bergomas in respect of ‘Popess Joan’”], *Review* 2 (1854), 247-251; H.Q. Janssen, “Pausin Johanna. Eene bijdrage tot de kennis der wijze, waarop hare geschiedenis behandeld is” [Popess Joan. A Contribution to what we know about how her History has been treated], *Review* 2 (1859), 58-64. Kist also published a German translation of his original paper: “Die Päpstin Johanna. Ein Beweis, daß die Untersuchung ihrer Geschichte noch keineswegs abgethan oder geschlossen ist”, *Zeitschrift für historische Theologie* 14 (1844), second part, pp. 3-79.

<sup>90</sup>. Lindeboom, “Honderd jaren” [“A Hundred Years”], p. 211: “Wensing sought to demonstrate what he saw as the inaccuracy of the Popess legend”.

<sup>91</sup>. J.M. Schröck, *Christliche Kirchengeschichte*, zweite verbesserte und vermehrte Ausgabe, volume 22 (Leipzig, 1796), pp. 99f.

<sup>92</sup>. J.J.I. von Döllinger, *Die Papst-Fabeln des Mittelalters. Ein Beitrag zur Kirchengeschichte*, zweite unveränderte Auflage (Munich, 1863), p. 1; cf. K. Herbers, “Die Päpstin Johanna. Ein kritischer Forschungsbericht”, *Historisches Jahrbuch* (Görres-Gesellschaft), 108 (1988), 174-194; A. Boureau, *La Papesse Jean*, Paris 1988; cf. Peter Stanford, *The She-Pope. A Quest for the Truth behind the Mystery of Pope Joan* (London, 1999).

<sup>93</sup>. Quoted in: J.C. van der Loos, “Geschiedenis van het Seminarie Warmond tot 1853” [“The History of the

Schaepman was also a church historian, a professor at the Major Seminary in Rijsenburg since 1870, and initiator of plans to establish a Catholic church-historical archive. He was, however, unable to reach agreement with others involved in the plan, including Canon Joannes Franciscus Vrege in Haarlem (1822-1892), whose ambitions lay more in setting up a journal focused specifically on the Haarlem diocese.<sup>94</sup> And so, in the early 1870s, two diocesan journals emerged: namely the *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom van Haarlem (1872-1958)* (*Contributions to the history of the Haarlem Diocese*)<sup>95</sup> and the *Archief voor de geschiedenis van het Aartsbisdom Utrecht (1874-1957)* (*Review of the history of the Archdiocese of Utrecht*).<sup>96</sup> From an historical point of view, there could be no proper justification for taking these recently established dioceses - following the restoration of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Netherlands (1853) - “as starting points for the study of a past, of which they were not a part”.<sup>97</sup>

Both journals were directed to both the publication of sources and the publication of articles. The *communis opinio* is that *Review* was the model on which both publications were based.<sup>98</sup> There is little additional information available on the editorial viewpoints and attitudes. Presumably the same kind of pragmatism as we discussed earlier prevailed here too, namely the search for causal links.<sup>99</sup> These initiatives fit well into the emancipatory quest towards ending

---

Warmond Seminary up to 1853”], *Bijdragen voor de geschiedenis van het Bisdom van Haarlem* [Contributions on the History of Haarlem Diocese] 48 (1932), 1-609, p. 579.

<sup>94</sup> L.J. Rogier, “Over de beoefening van de geschiedenis der Katholieke Kerk in Nederland sedert omstreeks 1870” [“The Study of the History of the Catholic Church in the Netherlands since ca. 1870”], *Archief voor de Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* [Review of the History of the Catholic Church in the Netherlands] 1 (1959), 1-25.

<sup>95</sup> Since 1934: *Haarlemse Bijdragen* [Haarlem Contributions].

<sup>96</sup> Merged since 1959 with the *Archief voor de Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* [Review of the History of the Catholic Church in the Netherlands].

<sup>97</sup> Rogier, “Over de beoefening”, p. 11.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. J.A. Bornewasser, “Geschiedbeoefening en katholieke geloofsovertuiging in verschuivend perspectief” [“The Study of History and Catholic Faith in a Shifting Perspective”] (1980), in: *Kerkelijk verleden in een wereldlijke context* [An Ecclesiastical Past in a Secular Context], Commemorative volume Bornewasser (Amsterdam, 1989), pp. 33-50, pp. 33f. in particular.

what was referred to as lack of Catholic involvement in the sciences.<sup>100</sup> History has always been a very effective instrument with which to strengthen and consolidate the identity of a specific group. There was no hesitation either in taking a Catholic standpoint or in heckling the “objectivity delusion” of the predominantly liberal historiography of the day which in this view was ‘Protestant’ to the core.<sup>101</sup>

This short review of the study of the Catholic side of church history, underpins once again just how emphatically Protestant the *Review* was. This tendency is, I am glad to say, currently undergoing change. But whilst Catholics in the second half of the 19th century adhered to *the* Catholic standpoint, in Protestant circles the conviction prevailed for a long time that Protestants were neutral.<sup>102</sup> In methodological terms, this was expressed in the call for impartiality; an anvil hammered on by the country’s church historians even before the Leiden historian, Robert Fruin (1823-1899) delved in great detail into this subject in his famous inaugural lecture of 1860.<sup>103</sup> According to Fruin, impartiality meant that one tried to do justice to all parties, without allowing oneself to succumb to indifference and waning morality.<sup>104</sup>

There was absolutely no misunderstanding of this. In his *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland voor de Hervorming* (*The church history of the Netherlands before the Reformation*), the church historian Moll pleaded for “our Roman forefathers”, “notwithstanding their inferior

---

<sup>100</sup> M.A.P.C. Poelhekke, *Het te-kort der katholieken in de wetenschap* [The Shortage of Catholics in Science] (Nijmegen, 1900).

<sup>101</sup> Bornewasser, “Geschiedbeoefening”, p. 37; cf. Rogier, “Over de beoefening”, pp. 16f.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Ph. de Vries, “The Writing and Study of History in the Netherlands in the 19th Century”, *Acta Historiae Neerlandica* 3 (1968), 247-265, p. 263 in particular.

<sup>103</sup> Kist, “De Geschiedenis van de Leer des Christendoms” [“The History of the Teaching of Christianity”], p. 37; Royaards, “Foreword”, in: *Archief voor kerkelijke en wereldsche geschiedenissen, inzonderheid van Utrecht* [Review of Ecclesiastical and Secular Histories, Utrecht in particular], p. i; E.J. Diest Lorgion, *De regte beoefening der historische theologie uitnemend geschikt ter opbouw van de kerk der toekomst* [The Proper Study of Historical Theology excellently suitable for building the Church of the Future] (Groningen, 1860), p. 23; cf. Kist, “Foreword”, *Review* 7 (1836), v-xi, p. viii: by placing a piece in the *Review*, “any suspicion of its publication having any semblance of a polemic intention was removed”.

<sup>104</sup> R.C. Fruin, *De onpartijdigheid van den geschiedschrijver* [The Impartiality of the Historiographer], (inaugural lecture Leiden) (Amsterdam, 1860) (= *Verspreide Geschriften*, part IX [The Hague, 1904] pp. 274-299), pp. 40-44; cf. J. Tollebeek, *De toga van Fruin. Denken over geschiedenis in Nederland sinds 1860* [Fruin’s Toga. Thinking about History in the Netherlands since 1860] (Amsterdam, 1990), pp. 16-67, pp. 26 & 33 in particular: “Fruin’s teaching on impartiality was purely the explicit theoretical legitimation of a study of history with one and the same purpose: the conciliation of the various life philosophies within the national framework consolidated after 1848”.



standpoints” to be seen as “instruments of God’s mercy”.<sup>105</sup> Moll believed that impartiality was not the same as principle-less. The practice of this virtue prevents egoistic opinions and enables “[the historiographer] himself to see in phenomena which he cannot be very fond of, the principles of truth inherent in them”.<sup>106</sup> The evolutionistic perspective on (religious) history led to the conviction that it was possible to do justice to all parties, without jeopardizing Protestant superiority. The on-going emancipation of Catholics and the increasingly serious cracks in Protestantism at the end of the 19th century, began only slowly to shake the foundations of this conviction - so strong was the ideal of the prevailing reformed elite that Protestantism constituted an integral component of the Dutch nation.<sup>107</sup>

We have just spent some time spotlighting the study of church history in the Netherlands of the 19th century. In order to effectively chart this field further, however, we will need not only to study the contents of the *Review*, but also what took place outside and beyond it. There were church history professors, for instance, who never published anything in the *Review*. It would also not be fair to limit ourselves to the occupiers of University Chairs. The religious history of the Netherlands has been studied by many more or less historically trained authors, including Catholics, Mennonites, Remonstrants, Lutherans, and members of the Reformed churches, who often chose to focus on the history of their own churches. This is open territory begging for future research.

The importance of the *Review* lies principally in the significant part it played in the processes of emancipation, independence and professionalisation of church history in the Netherlands. A temporary end to the development was Acquoy’s 1894 *Handleiding tot de kerkgeschiedvorsching en kerkgeschiedschrijving* (*Manual for the study and writing of church history*).<sup>108</sup> This publication gave a comprehensive account of the various kinds of sources, how

---

<sup>105</sup>. Willem Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland voor de Hervorming* [The Church History of the Netherlands before the Reformation] part I (Arnhem, 1864), p. xl.

<sup>106</sup>. Ibid., p. xxxviii.

<sup>107</sup>. Cf. A.L. Molendijk, “De vervluchtiging van het vrijzinnig protestantisme in Nederland” [“The Evaporisation of Liberal Protestantism in the Netherlands”], *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* [Dutch Theological Journal] 50 (1996), 122-134; Molendijk, “Die Verflüchtigung des freisinnigen Protestantismus in den Niederlanden”, in: *Zeitschrift für Neuere Theologiegeschichte* 8 (2001), 58-72.

<sup>108</sup>. J.G.R. Acquoy, *Handleiding tot de kerkgeschiedvorsching en kerkgeschiedschrijving* [Manual for the Study and Writing of Church History] (The Hague, 1894). The second edition was prepared by F. Pijper and appeared in 1910.

they should be used, which other sciences and instruments could supplement the study, as well as how an historical paper should be constructed, up to and including preparing the manuscript for publication, and correcting the proofs. Acquoy suggested, as the basis for the working method, that the study of church history, did not in principle differ from the study of history in general. And it was for this reason, therefore, that he could recommend his *Manual* to the wider spectrum of historians.<sup>109</sup>

A matter of principle which Acquoy touched on, was the name given to the discipline. He referred in this context to his own 1882 inaugural lecture, in which he had expressed his personal preference for the term “the history of Christianity” above “church history”. Considerations included the fact that Christianity was already in existence long before the arrival of the church, that there are many churches in fact and, finally, that the discipline should also include the history of heresy.<sup>110</sup> For Acquoy, this argumentation was still valid, but for practical reasons he remained loyal to the old terminology - he felt, for instance, that the term “the history of Christianity” did not lend itself to abbreviation, and nor did he approve of word ‘fusions’ such as “Christianity-historian”.

Acquoy continued the line set by Kist and Royaards. His manual represents an excellent summary of the ideal of an historiography based on a comprehensive study of the sources, although he did reject the pragmatic approach on the grounds that moral lessons and cautions were to be sought elsewhere.<sup>111</sup> He did, on the other hand, put a strong emphasis on an artistic presentation. The ideal of the “historian-artist” is no longer current, although it is still important for an historian to have a good writing style. Both in terms of method and content, Acquoy adequately set the parameters of the principles applicable to the writing of history: Church history is an historical discipline which concerns itself with the history of Christianity. Efforts made in the 20th century to place the discipline once again at the service of systematic theology have, in my opinion, only been damaging.

This does not imply that we can simply turn back to Acquoy’s basic starting points.

---

<sup>109</sup>. Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>110</sup>. J.G.R. Acquoy, *Kerkgeschiedenis en geschiedenis van het christendom* [Church History and the History of Christianity] (Leiden, 1882); cf. F. Pijper, *De geschiedenis van het godsdienstig-zedelijk leven* [The History of Religious-moral Life] (inaugural address Leiden) (The Hague, 1897), pp. 4-7.

<sup>111</sup>. Acquoy, *Handleiding* [Manual], p. 117.

Emancipation, in terms of church institutions and theological premises is still on-going. The barriers between Catholic historiography and Protestant historiography are disintegrating slowly but surely. There is also a growing awareness that religion never exists in a social vacuum. There are countless cross-beams which link it to political, social, economical and cultural developments. An inter-disciplinary approach is, therefore, of the essence.<sup>112</sup> The general study of history is not concerned solely with political and institutional history, but includes as many aspects as possible, such as religion, local culture, economic and demographic developments, mentalities, and so on. The dominant ‘from above’ approach is complemented with a ‘from below’ approach. In the study of church history, we see a similar degree of focus on how believers practice and express their faith.<sup>113</sup> From this viewpoint, the material religious culture is also an important aspect of the study. In this connection, I am not thinking purely of church buildings, their interiors, and the church hymn culture, but also of religious hairstyles, clothing and tattoos, devotional books, house altars, marriage bibles and cemeteries.<sup>114</sup> I am convinced that focusing attention on the material and social reality of the Christian religion is important for both academic education and research, which does not mean that church institutions and Christian perceptions should no longer be of any consequence.

I would like, finally, to briefly recall to mind what moved Royaards and Kist when at the end of their Foreword to the first issue of the *Review* they expressed in such noble terms the hope of being able to provide something useful “for this, in many respects, most important science”.<sup>115</sup> It was not the principle of *l’art pour l’art* which they envisaged, albeit that they attached enormous value to their discipline. They were also not thinking initially about the usefulness of church history studies for theology in a broader sense, on the one hand, and for

---

<sup>112</sup> Cf. J. Spaans, “Zeventiende-eeuwse kerkgeschiedenis en interdisciplinariteit” [“17th Century Church History and Interdisciplinarity”], *De zeventiende eeuw* [The 17th Century] 14 (1998), 206-217.

<sup>113</sup> Jim Sharpe, “History from Below”, in: Peter Burke, ed., *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Cambridge 1991, pp. 24-41; cf. W. Frijhoff, “Van ‘histoire de l’église’ naar ‘histoire religieuse’” [“From ‘histoire de l’église’ to ‘histoire religieuse’”], *Review* 61 (1981), 113-153; Frijhoff, *Embodied Belief. Ten Essays on Religious Culture in Dutch history* (Hilversum, 2002), pp. 275-289.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity. Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven – London, 1995); Arie L. Molendijk, ed., *Materieel Christendom. Religie en materiële cultuur in West-Europa* [Material Christianity. Religion and Material Culture in Western Europe] (Hilversum, 2003).

<sup>115</sup> Kist & Royaards, “Voorrede” [“Foreword”], *Review* 1 (1829), xii.

other sciences, on the other hand, although they had high hopes on this.<sup>116</sup> It was the importance of church history for the nation, which preoccupied them most. Although the *Review* was directed to a limited history-oriented public, it was a public which felt itself bonded to the broader ‘whole’ of church and country. Was church history, after all, not an important part of the nation’s total history? Bernard ter Haar expressed it in more lyrical terms. He would be content, he said, if the *History of the Christian Church in the Netherlands*, which he edited, were to make a useful contribution “to the Christian Church in the Netherlands and to the Fatherland itself, reaching out to a beautiful and happy future”.<sup>117</sup>

[foto s.v.p. plaatsen en retour met volgende bijschrift:]

Title page of the first issue of the *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis* (University Library Groningen).

### *Appendix*

A Hundred Years of the Netherlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis (Dutch Review of Church History)

1829-1840     *Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, inzonderheid van Nederland*, edited by N.C. Kist (1829-1859) & H.J. Royaards (1829-1854) - 11 parts.

-----  
1841-1849     *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis*, ed. N.C. Kist (1829-1859) & H.J. Royaards (1829-1854) - 9 parts

-----  
1852-1854     *Nieuw Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, inzonderheid van Nederland*, edited by N.C. Kist (1829-1859) & H.J. Royaards (1829-1854) - 2 parts  
-----

---

<sup>116</sup>. Ibid., p. vii.

<sup>117</sup>. B. ter Haar, et. al., *Geschiedenis der Christelijke Kerk in Nederland* [The History of the Christian Church in the Netherlands], part I, p. 12.

1857-1866     *Kerkhistorisch Archief*, ed. by N.C. Kist (1829-1859) & W. Moll (1854-1879) - 4 parts

-----  
1870-1880     *Studiën en Bijdragen op het gebied van de historische theologie*, ed. by W. Moll (1854-1879) & J.G. de Hoop Scheffer (1866-1880) - 4 parts

-----  
1884-1899     *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kerkgeschiedenis*, ed. by J.G.R. Acquoy (1884-1896), H.C. Rogge (1884-1905), A.W. Wybrands (1884-1886) & F. Pijper (1897-1926) - 7 parts

-----  
1902-1929     *Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, ed. by H.C. Rogge (1884-1905), F. Pijper (1897-1926), A. Eekhof (1911-1933) & J. Lindeboom (1911-1957) - 22 parts